

A DOCTOR'S MISSION

BY EMILY THORNTON

Author of "ROY RUSSELL'S RULE,"
"GLENROY," "THE FASHIONABLE MOTHER," ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

Drawing an easy seat close to the center table for Mrs. Clum to occupy, Dr. Elfenstein seated himself in his own office chair, and laying the wallet before him, said:

"This, Mrs. Clum, is a little bag containing something very much valued by the poor man who has just left this world. I presume it will acquaint us with the residence and address of his dear relatives. In order that they may be notified of his death, I deem it my duty to immediately examine its contents, and as I do so, I wish you to be present as a witness to the transaction."

The key to the wallet Dr. Elfenstein found tied close to the edge of the handle. Inserting this in the lock, he at once opened it and drew forth its contents.

All that presented itself to his notice was about fifty pounds in money, and a package of closely written papers. These were without address or signature, but seemed a short journal of daily events.

Little did Dr. Elfenstein dream, as he so coolly turned over these leaves, that they contained matters so vitally important to himself and his future life!

Seeing no other mode of ascertaining who the dead man really was, the doctor commenced at the beginning to read as follows:

"June 18.—My God, my God! Why hast Thou forsaken me? I am almost daily my cry. Alone, horribly, cruelly alone! how can it be that I still exist?"

"Nearly eighteen years have I survived this dreadful solitude, and not until today have I gained from my unnatural keeper the slight boon of pen, ink and paper. This gained, I will divert myself by noting down some incidents of my life. But to what purpose do I write? Who can ever read what, out of an aching heart, I shall commit to these pages?"

"Yet, after my death, some person may penetrate this living tomb, and then they shall here see recorded the terrible wrong, the fearful fate that has thus befallen an unhappy peer of the realm!"

"Have I been misused from my home? Has any one mourned over my unexplained absence? Has my poor Constance wept over my loss? And has my dear brother Fitzroy forgiven my harshness now that he thinks me dead?"

"Dead? Yes, all think me dead! I see clearly at this late date the whole of Reginald's fiendish plot. He used that dagger on my arm to draw blood, in order to leave the impression that I had been murdered, before he shut me into this living tomb."

"Yet I live. I, Sir Arthur Glendenning, Bart., am alive to-day, incarcerated in this concealed room, built in the ruined part of my own residence."

"Ha!" exclaimed Earle Elfenstein, starting to his feet, as he read thus far. "What have I here? If this be true, we have before us an explanation of Sir Arthur's fate. Mrs. Clum, we must have others present at the reading of this important paper. Let us both seek instant aid for the presence of our neighbors. Will you summon Lawyer Huntley, who lives next door, while I go for Rev. Mr. Lee? Not one moment will we waste, for who knows but yonder corpse may be all that is left of poor Sir Arthur Glendenning?"

Replacing the papers and keeping the precious wallet in his hand, Earle at once left the house for the manse, while Mrs. Clum ran out to summon Mr. Huntley. In less than half an hour they both returned to the physician's office, accompanied by the above named gentlemen.

Then, while eager attention was to be seen on every face, the doctor again opened the wallet, and read, as far as we have written above.

"Merciful heaven, can this be true?" exclaimed Mr. Huntley. "Doctor, please read that last clause once more. I am so dazed with surprise that I can scarcely understand it."

"Yet I live, I, Sir Arthur Glendenning, Bart., am alive to-day, incarcerated in this concealed room, built in the ruined part of my own residence," again read Dr. Elfenstein, and after a pause he continued:

"The fact that this room existed was known only to my father, Sir Geoffrey, and he, shortly before his death, confided the secret to my brother Reginald and myself. We three were alone together when he taught us to open the panels by the aid of a sharp pointed knife, and after leading us inside this strange apartment, he charged us to keep the existence of the place a profound secret, as the time might come when such a hidden retreat might prove of immense importance."

"Dear father! how little did he dream that Reginald, for the sake of usurping my lawful title and estates, would drag me hither, in the darkness of night, and, by chaining me like a beast to the floor, by the help of his valet, Antoine Duval, keep me a prisoner for months, year, life!"

"It was the only time I ever saw this room, until the night I was thrust within it by my inhuman brother Reginald, two days and one night after I was forcibly taken from my bed."

"Ah, that night! when they overpowered me in my own room; shall I ever forget it? I had retired rather earlier than usual, and had fallen immediately asleep. About midnight, I should judge, I was awakened by feeling a hand pressing something to my nostrils."

"I instantly had my complete senses, so dashed the hand with the phorform sponge from my face, then sprang with a bound upon the floor."

"Two men stood above me, and firm hands seized and pressed me back, and a gag was forced into my mouth. A dim light was burning and I saw that, although masked, one figure was like Fitzroy's, and his dressing gown was wrapped around his form."

"Oh, how I struggled to free myself! Once I did get a hand loose, and tore the mask from one face, to find it was not Fitzroy, but Reginald who was perpetrating this outrage upon me, his elder brother. Turning then to the other, I

recognized the form and voice of Antoine Duval.

"In the course of the conflict Reginald drew out a dagger and plunged it into my arm, then threw the dagger, red with blood, on the carpet, saying grimly:

"Fitzroy's dagger. Lie there and testify that he did this deed!"

"Oh, my brother, my innocent brother! have they dared accuse thee of my death? This question harrows me night and day. Alas! I tremble for Fitzroy, when such a fiend as Reginald has proved himself to be is let loose upon his track."

"But to go on: Binding my hands—for all my strength could avail little against two hardy men—they passed a rope around my body, after first putting on my clothing, and, dragging me from the window, swung me from the balcony to the ground below."

"Carrying then my helpless form to the lake, they there bound up my wounds, staunching the flow of blood, which until then they had allowed to drip as it would, then turned and noiselessly bore me to a lonely cave, situated in the heart of Demon's Wood—a place never frequented, and, I presume, the existence of which was unknown."

"This place had been prepared for my reception, and after fastening me firmly to a staple with a chain they had in readiness, they left me, gagged and helpless, then alone, for two days and one night. Twice they both came with food, and, while one stood with a pistol over my head, to prevent a word, the other fed me."

"On the second night they visited me about midnight, and, merely saying:

"All is now ready for your reception, rise and go with us," they placed me in a wagon as before and took me back to the Hall."

"Leaving the wagon concealed outside the grounds, they between them carried me to the ruined part, and, entering, conveyed me into this, my prison, which they had secretly arranged for my use. I was not brought here at once, it seems, because on the very night of their daring outrage they had discovered that some revolving iron shelves they had fitted to the entrance could not be securely fastened, as the large screws to be inserted were too short. Not wishing to postpone the horrible business, they had hastily prepared the cave, and held me there until other screws could be procured."

"Now all was ready and here, just eighteen years ago, I was thrust and kept a prisoner by means of a long chain fastened from my ankle to an iron bolt in the wall. I was securely fastened, and the gag was taken from my mouth, and the ropes from my limbs."

"From that hour I have seen no human face, heard no human voice! These walls, I know, are several feet thick, built so that no sound can issue from them. Not a movement can be heard, unless the panels are open, and then but faintly."

"Oh, innocent, ruined brother! Oh, forgetful Constance! When shall I cease to think of these two?"

Earle Elfenstein paused when he reached these last words, and large tears of sympathy still rolled over his cheeks, as they had often done during the reading, while every one of his intent listeners were similarly affected. Conquering his emotion by an effort, he again read on:

"May 24, 18.—Nearly seven years since I last wrote on these pages. Not once during that time has there been a change in my lot until to-night."

"To-night a different hand opened the panels. I knew instantly that it was not Reginald's. Something certainly must have happened to him. The jerk was wanting."

"A soft, uncertain way of pushing them apart attracted my attention. There was a longer pause, a seeming study of the modus operandi of the revolving shelves, and a slighter push made them turn more slowly. Yes, I am sure a stranger has been let into the secret of my confinement; and that stranger, I think, must be a timid woman."

"June 6, 18.—Something terrible has happened to my brain. I am wild! I am undone! I can remember nothing! Who am I? Where am I? Ah, yes; I have! I was a peer; I am no longer."

"I am a poor minister of the gospel, confined here for the sake of religion. I am, in short, Rev. Edwin C. Stiles. How strange that I am here! I can remember nothing."

"But I have a Bible, and I read and preach long sermons, and pray continually. Yes, some day I shall, I think, be released. I shall preach the gospel. How strange my head feels! Sometimes I think I am going mad!"

"July 18.—I am preaching and praying constantly. Night and day I plead with God to send me a knife. Will my prayers be granted? Shall I ever have a knife? Can I ever cut my way out of this weary prison, out to liberty, and preaching?"

"July 19.—Hallelujah! My prayer is heard! A knife came to me with my food; sent me, I presume, by accident. I was forgotten, and now it is mine! I shall write no more. I shall instantly get to work; I shall soon be a free man."

"But these pages, written as it were, with my heart's blood, I shall never once leave out of the reach of my hands. I am Rev. Edwin C. Stiles, a minister of the gospel, and these lines are my diploma, my badge of office. Ha, ha; a knife is mine; my own! And now I shall work myself free!"

Elfenstein paused and passed his hand over his forehead in deep thought. A sudden idea had seized him; it was this: Ethel Nevergill and he must have been in the corridor when this poor creature escaped! Yes; poor creature! These last lines told that he must have been insane, or nearly so, at least, when he escaped.

But he had no time to think; a few more words remained to be read, and his audience were eagerly waiting. These were written in pencil, and the letters

were crooked and feeble, as though written in great weakness.

"August 18.—I am sick, dying, perhaps! O joy! if this could prove to be death! I am weary, tired, worn out, but I thank God I am again myself."

"Now I know I am Sir Arthur Glendenning. Lately I have been confused, and thought myself a minister. My brain, my poor brain, was unstrung. At last I am myself."

"A knife came to me and I took out the screws from the shelves, opened the panels after pushing the shelves aside, and escaped from my prison."

"In the corridor I came upon a young girl and a man. Strangers; I knew that at once. Both were strangers. Yet I feared recapture."

"I rushed forward, dashed the light from them, and then another frenzy seized me, and my poor head nearly burst with pain. I uttered a cry in my agony. Then another, as I rushed through the well-known ruins."

"The night air revived me. I had not felt its cheering influence, drawn a fresh mouthful of outside air, in twenty-five years. I opened my mouth, I expanded my chest, I drank it all in."

"What cared I for the storm, the howling wind, the falling rain? It was delight, it was rapture! I was free! I was free!"

"I knew not where to go, but sped away, away, and rested not until I was hidden in the cave in Demon's wood. There I slept and rested. There I quieted my overwrought nerves, and thanked God for the blessed knife."

"Morning came, and again I tried to think. My brain seemed heavy, and I could scarcely remember my own name. But it came to me after awhile. Rev. Edwin C. Stiles, a minister of the gospel. But how could I preach in these threadbare clothes? I must get suitable garments. I had money; I always had had money. I had it in my pocketbook when cast into prison. My persecutors did not rob me."

"So I took the care and went to Liverpool, where I bought a suit of clerical clothes, and books, and papers to sell. I bought also a little wallet, in which to lock up these pages. Something tells me I must never part with these my papers."

"Yes; I have them safe. Now lying here, the wallet is safe in my hands. I returned to the village then, and must have wandered around, selling my books as Rev. Edwin C. Stiles."

"But now, I am sane. My senses have returned. I am Sir Arthur Glendenning, and I am dying. I know I must have been insane, or partly so, for the last few weeks; but my mind is clear, perfectly clear to-night."

"In this cave I was taken ill, and could scarcely move for days. I had food to last for a week or more, and I crawled out, once in a while, for water."

"But now food has gone. I am too weak to drag myself to the spring. I thirst. I am burning with fever. I think I shall die! Farewell earth! I shall write no more; but with my latest sigh, I thank God that I die a free man."

CHAPTER XXI.

This, then, was the end of it all! The wayfarer man, dead, in his upper room, was not the Rev. Edwin C. Stiles, but Sir Arthur Glendenning, the lost baronet.

Lost! Yes, indeed, lost to his friends, but not murdered. And Dr. Elfenstein felt a thrill of joy pass over him as the next thought came. His employer was now Sir Fitzroy Glendenning, and he was entirely cleared of the heinous crime with which he had so long been charged. He was ready to be received joyfully back to his own estate and home.

Yes! his summons could bring him, for he alone knew where he resided. He should start for New York immediately, and accompany and care for him on his return voyage.

Then another thought came—a thought that made his heart throb tumultuously, and that thought was this: His pledge had been fulfilled!

Sir Fitzroy's name was cleared, and now he was free to woo and wed the girl of his choice. But, as gladly as his heart thrilled one moment before, so suddenly had it sunk again, like lead in his bosom. Was this girl—this one girl that he so devotedly loved—worthy? Had she a knowledge of that hidden crime? Was her hand the one that nightly opened those panels, and shored in that repulsive food to a human being—a peer of the English realm! Again, with a smothered groan he felt that it was she!

He remembered her wild entreaty, that he should neither light a candle nor search that corridor, on that dreadful night. And he had been fool enough to listen to her pleadings. Yes! He was convinced that she had aided the inhuman brother in carrying out his wicked purposes!

But again he thrust away the idea; and at last resolved to see this girl, just once more, accuse her of being an accessory to this foul wrong, and then hear her reasons for so doing. Possibly there might be some extenuating circumstances, some unexplained reason why she had lent herself to this purpose.

(To be continued.)

The Stealing of Cattle.

One source of immense trouble to cattlemen has been the calf thief. Many a large "outfit" has gone out of business on account of the "rustler."

Where cow herders have to ride the range for fifty or seventy-five miles they are likely to be forestalled in branding a calf by some vigilant rustler whose little mountain ranch is near the usual grazing place of a bunch of cattle. Or very possibly the puncher for the big 3C ranch has caught and branded the calf with its proper mark; and when many months later he rides on a yearling branded BOB he has no means of knowing that the owner of the latter brand has deftly touched up the 3C with a running iron by the artistic addition of two strokes and an added letter. It may be stated parenthetically in passing that more than one large "outfit" of to-day got its start entirely from "rustled" cattle.

In the more arid southwest rustling is not so common because most of the water is pumped and cattle get into the habit of coming home often to drink and can be watched more closely, but even there it is a factor of no slight importance.—Leslie's Monthly.

The average man clings tenaciously to his own opinions, but he expects other people to change theirs.

CENSUS TAKING IN INDIA.

A Colossal Work Accomplished Decennially by the British.

In India census-taking is a colossal task accomplished decennially, with noteworthy success, by the British government. Even among those who find descriptions of census methods dry reading at best, interest must be awakened by the difficulties surmounted in that land of splendor and squalor, vast population, and innumerable races, languages and religions.

The population of India is 294,206,501—a figure so vast that it is better realized by considering the fact that there are more than 715,000 villages and towns scattered over an area of one and a half million square miles. To make the enumeration of this vast territory, virtually a million enumerators are required.

The successive steps of census organization are the enumerator's "block," the "circle," "the charge," the district, the province, and finally the Imperial Census Commission. A charge comprises two or more circles, a circle is composed of ten or fifteen blocks, and the block contains from thirty to fifty houses.

The provincial superintendents begin the work of organization a year in advance of the census date. Officers are designated, the villages in each circle are listed, block lists are prepared, and every house is numbered, in some provinces the census authorities determine in advance the size of the number, and specify the proportions of red color and oil, or other ingredients, forming the substance with which the number is to be painted.

Even in this simple detail, however, racial difficulties are encountered: In Hyderabad objection is made to the use of red color, and red color is substituted; in some other localities, on the contrary, the natives consider red color unlucky, and if it is used they carefully erase the figures. On roofs of walled bamboo a small space is plastered and then whitewashed, to form a background for the number. In the case of huts made of leaves, and also when objection is made, on account of caste restrictions, to the touching of houses by enumerators, the numbers are painted on bits of tin, tiles or pots conspicuously placed, and are usually treated with great respect by the natives.

In this immensely populous and remarkable empire the census schedule is framed to meet a wide variety of local and racial conditions. It is printed in no less than seventeen different languages, and includes, in addition to the ordinary inquiries, questions concerning religion and caste.—Century.

Water as a Cure.

A well-known physician says that the girl who has not a clear complexion and wishes one has a simple remedy right at hand if she cares to use it. And it is water, applied not outwardly, but inwardly. That is not so much outwardly as inwardly.

This authority says that the sailor girl should drink two quarts of water between rising and retiring, but not a drop at meals. More than this, the water drunk must not be too cold. Ice water does not help the cause of beauty. Cool spring water, if it is to be had, is better, or, at least, water of the temperature of spring water.

The drinking of too little water he believes to be the cause of many ills.

Surely here is a way to attain beauty of complexion that is simpler than many of the cosmetics prescribed, but its very simplicity will keep it from being much used, for there are in the land a number of people who believe in complicated prescriptions that puzzle them, but in nothing that they understand.

Gen. Clay's Courage.

General Cassius M. Clay fought many duels in his day, usually with his long-bladed knife, meeting pistol or rifle equally with that trusty weapon. His physical strength was gigantic. He was accustomed to the use of weapons, and he was always cool and never lost his judgment. For example, when an adversary shot him, and he supposed he was done for, he inflated his lungs to the full, conscious that he would live as long as he could hold his breath. Then he drew his knife and did his bloody work. That was when he killed Turner. After all, speaking musically, reviewing his life, he confessed to a reporter, when he was about 84, that he was opposed on principle to the duel, thinking it a savage way to settle a difficulty, "but there are some cases for which it seems to be the only remedy."—New York Tribune.

Only Temporary Idleness.

"I assure you, madam," said he, "that I would not be begging my bread from door to door if I could but procure employment at my profession."

"Poor man," replied the good woman, as she handed out a pie, "what is your profession?"

"I am an air ship pilot, madam."—Tit Bits.

Not Out of the Ordinary.

Cadley—I must confess I was pretty cranky yesterday. Did the girls say anything about it?

Kander—Oh, no.

Cadley—Strange they didn't notice my behavior.

Kander—I guess they didn't see anything unusual about it.—Philadelphia Press.

Part of the Population.

Paris uses 200,000,000 snails as food annually. And yet the town is not so slow.—Washington Star.

Women and opportunity like to make allies when you are out.

VELVETS ARE BRIGHT

INCREASE IN VIVIDNESS AS EACH NEW ONE COMES OUT.

Solid Color Weaves and Figured Materials Are All Strikingly Tinted and Designs Are Prominent—Lace Is Much Used on Evening Gowns.

New York correspondence:

EW velvets increase in vividness with every addition the shops make to their supplies. This applies as well to real velvet and the finest quality of the velvet and the various sorts of velvet, some of which are materials of decided worth. All the grades show brilliant tones in the solid color weaves, and the brightest of them are displayed in such quantity that they plainly are intended as the material for gowns, not merely as trimming. This impression is corroborated by study of model dresses, in which are velvets of the brightest possible shade. They are handsome get-ups, made daily, for the most part, but with trim-

ing placed wherever the goods come next the wearer's neck, face or arms. And this trimming serves quite as much to relieve the skin from too close contact with the vivid shadings, as it does to ornament the gown. This point is one that should have very careful consideration by purchasers. Few complexions stand contact with these brilliant colors, and none can stand them all. So the intending buyer should either choose wisely one that is safe, or else have well in mind some general scheme for fencing herself off from it. The latter process can be attained with entire success, combining stylishness, beauty and an outfit quite in harmony with the cost of the velvet that may be in the gown itself.

The drinking of too little water he believes to be the cause of many ills. Surely here is a way to attain beauty of complexion that is simpler than many of the cosmetics prescribed, but its very simplicity will keep it from being much used, for there are in the land a number of people who believe in complicated prescriptions that puzzle them, but in nothing that they understand.

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Women and opportunity like to make allies when you are out.

On evening gowns and wraps the use of lace is to be lavish. Its employment is not characterized by the set design and stiffness that often marked last winter's applications, especially those that were in the medallion way. Almost all of it has a look of softness, and while the treatment of a year ago was handsome, the newer arrangements seem even more beautiful. New fashions that plainly are an improvement on the old take hold quickly, and this change is being effected according to this rule. Valenciennes is much favored, but the available list is long. It takes in mechiu, chantilly, point de Paris, milanese, filet, point d'esprit, lierre, Paraguay, Mexican and arges, with many more less well known, but with beauty to recommend them. Elaborate dressers are not content with the use of such laces in simple fashion, but must trim them to the end that the whole result appear more complex. The designs of the lace are outlined with ruchings. This trick has an endorsement whose cordiality amounts almost to ad-

ditional taste. There may be little or much. A modest, inconspicuous design, little more than an edging or a narrow band, will suffice, or the material may be almost hidden. What is permitted in the way of showy treatment is suggested in the wrap at the right in the second picture, which was white cloth embroidered with white silk cord. At the right in the concluding picture is another white cloth wrap with white cord embroidery distributed less lavishly. Quite as often the embroidery is upon bands or pieces of contrasting goods that are then applied. Such bands or pieces may be extensive, or may be limited to small dimensions, appearing at cuffs and edges. Many gowns include tiny jackets of the contrasting material entirely covered with

the embroidery. Cords, braids and passementeries in large variety, but chiefly of the smaller sizes, are employed very freely in this way. Bands are often embroidered with silks and flosses of the heavier sorts. Much of the more attractive and serviceable ornamentation of the winter fashions lies in such banding. Its uses constitute one of the best of current chances for the home dressmaker to attain stylish finish without great outlay.

Yak lace in several shades is very smart.

Black, white, cream, ecru and champagne are the shades in which the new silk laces will be conspicuous.

Ermine will be favored among the white furs, though its scarcity has led to a considerable advance in price.

A plaited green chiffon lining is effective under a white cloth garment, the fringe of the lining falling below the cloth.

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